



You don't have to be perfect  
to be a perfect parent.

## Foster Care Facts and Figures

### CHILDREN ENTERING FOSTER CARE

- Approximately 300,000 children enter foster care each year.
- Currently, there are 518,000 children in foster care.
- There are approximately 118,000 children in foster care waiting for permanent families.

### CHARACTERISTICS OF CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE

- Almost half (49%) of children waiting for adoption are ages 9 or older.
- The average age of a child in foster care is 10.1 years.
- 42% (52,935) of children in foster care are African American.
- 13% (16,324) of children in foster care are Hispanic.

### THE NEED FOR PARENTS

- Each year, approximately 19,000 children "age out" of the foster care system without ever having been placed with a permanent family.
- Children who exit foster care without a permanent family are at high risk for poor outcomes including dropping out of school, unemployment, low wages, drug use and even jail time.
- Half of all children in foster care have been in care for at least 18 months.
- Almost one third (31%) of youth ages 9 and older in foster care have been in care for 4 or more years.
- Lengthy stays in foster care can have a negative impact on children's mental health and well-being.
- Transitioning to adulthood is a difficult time for any adolescent, and youth in foster care are particularly in need of ongoing support from a permanent, loving family.



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